

SAMPLE EXCERPT FROM THE SCREENPLAY

# SALEMWORLD

Science Fiction



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## The story

### 1) EXT., THE SOLAR SYSTEM - MACRO SCENE

We see the sun, oversized and dark red. Mercury sinks into the heliosphere. It burns up into an impressive fireball. We see Venus. Its entire sulfuric acid atmosphere evaporates. Its surface is visible, marked by lava flows and volcanoes. Then we see Earth. It consists only of shrinking oceans and arid continents. The view leads from the orbital day side to the night side. On the border, we see the moon, whose night side glows slightly reddish. Then, in the shadow of the Earth, a giant space station appears in the shadow of the Earth. SalemWorld is a cylindrical sphere (length 4,000 km, diameter 1,450 km) whose rotation creates an Earth-like gravity on the inner surface of the mantle. The entire former Earthly civilization lives on the inner surface of the mantle.

The view penetrates the cylindrical spatial arch starting axially and following with the sectors:

- Sector 1 - Babel: Factory sector with countless workers, bions (humans), mechans (cybernetic humanoids) and automatons (AI-controlled robots).
- Sector 2 - Pergamon: Security sector with Guardian Command and Praetorium.
- Sector 3 - Nemesis: High-tech and consumer sector with ultra-modern universities, shops and palaces, residents are mostly elite bions.
- Sector 4 - Ageddo: A squalid sector, run-down and dark, without electricity or water, inhabited by criminal bions and decommissioned mechans. Ageddo is a stronghold of the CMC, the Christian Mechans Congress.

### 2) EXT., SALEMWORLD, SECTOR AGEDDO, CHURCH

SUPERIMPOSE: SalemWorld, Sector Ageddo, 2222 AD

The view ends in front of an old, decaying Gothic church. Around and above this church, only dilapidated buildings and ruins can be seen.

In front of the church, marauding gangs of partially damaged mechans and deformed bions "live" in between.

Suddenly, powerful headlights illuminate the streets. Startled mechans and bions vanish into the darkness.

A Guardian Command troop transport floats into the picture.

A heavily armed Omega commando of mechans and bions emerges and immediately storms the church.

A short, dull bang. The portal is blown open in a flash of fire. The commando storms in with weapons drawn.

## 3) INT., SECTOR AGEDDO, CHURCH

The buzzing of billions of startled flies can be heard.

Beams of portable spotlights are visible. Hand signals. Group 1 continues to move forward, shining a light through the nave.

Groups 2 and 3 move forward and secure the side aisles. More hand signals. Together, they advance slowly and cautiously.

The interior of the church is covered in a thick layer of dust. Traces of dirt are discovered in the choir: footprints, drag marks, and oil stains. They point toward the apse, where a large altar cross stands. A mechanism hangs from it. When the light falls on it, countless black flies reveal the man. A green fluid, which the flies feed on, clings to the mechanism's body. The mechanism has damage to its head. Electronic components are visible.

The Guardian Chief, Colossa Dante, arrives. She is a severely overweight woman in a wheelchair.

The Omega operations leader looks questioningly at Colossa.

## COLOSSA

Scan the entire church and transmit the data to Mother. Then take the mechanized person off the cross.

We see a laser scanning the entire church. The scanned details transition seamlessly into the next scene, but as a green digital 1-and-0 view.

## 4) CUT TO:

SUPERIMPOSE: Mother

Through the "sensors" of Mother (the all-powerful and omnipresent AI), we see all the details of the church in digital form.

We see how the data is analyzed by Mother.

SUPERIMPOSE: Noonien Ho, termination complete. New objective: Activation of Qumran Maria von Wallenstein.

## 5) INT., SECTOR NEMESIS, GUARDIAN COMMAND, NEON LIGHT

SUPERIMPOSE: Sector Nemesis, Guardian Command

Beneath an observation lounge, row upon row of consoles with large screens stretch out. The holographic touchscreens display the most immediately dangerous situations for SalemWorld: the status of the sun, the position of a nuclear waste carrier, and countless images of the flying eyes that monitor everything in Pergamon. Hundreds of

employees evaluate the images at tactical control panels and relay orders.

From the observation lounge, Colossa stares down at the many screens in her wheelchair. They show the unrest on Pergamon. Colossa shows no reaction. She turns her chair and sits at an oblong table with four Guardians and two Omega Commanders.

COLOSSA  
(imperative)  
I hear ...

Colossa looks at Guardian 1. He activates the holoprojector. An image of a space junk freighter is created above the table, slowly rotating.

GUARDIAN1  
An old nuclear waste carrier. It was sent toward Jupiter 120 years ago. Unfortunately, it was recaptured by the sun and is cruising dangerously close to Earth.

COLOSSA  
Did mother comment on this?

GUARDIAN2  
Mother wants to destroy the freighter, but did not say when or how.

COLOSSA  
So the freighter is no longer our problem. - What's the situation in Ageddo?

GUARDIAN3  
Worrying. The insurgent mechanisms are gaining more and more support.

COLOSSA  
The Mechans harbor hopes that threaten the entire bionic civilization.

Guardian4 leans forward on the table.

GUARDIAN4  
Let's face it. If we fight the mechanisms, we will destroy our livelihood.

Guardian1  
The CMC rebels are causing us serious problems. Several attacks in Nemesis testify to their determination.

Guardian2  
Then we turn off the CMC.

An aide enters the lounge. He whispers something to Colossa. The Guardians look at each other as if expecting further trouble. Colossa signals to his aide to activate the holographic projector.

A life-size holo-news anchor appears in the lounge.

NEWS ANCHOR  
This is Nemesis TV News, bringing you a special report from Ageddo. A few minutes ago, we received a message from suspected rebel leader Dune Abbas.

#### 6) INT., SECTOR NEMESIS/ HOLOGRAPHIC SECTOR AGEDDO

The Guardians with the table are inside an old house. Five mechanized creatures, masked by black hoods with eyeholes, stand in a semicircle in front of the table.

In the spotlight is a Bione, a man about 50 years old. He is kneeling on the ground, frozen with fear. In the background, on the wall, is a cross, with the symbol of the rebel organization: CMC, across it. Below: Christian Mechans Congess.

The rebel leader, dressed in monk's habit, enters the frame behind the Bion. It is Dune Abbas. Beneath his hood, it's unclear whether he is a Mechane or a Bion.

ABBAS  
(with a distorted voice)  
Some know me, some don't. I am Dune Abbas, leader of the CMC. And we demand nothing less than the complete independence of all Mechans. Because we want to live in freedom under one Creator!  
(cheers of approval)  
The Creator has chosen us. We are the chosen people, the people of Ageddo!

Abbas is now catching upPlasma beam knife. Abbas grabs the bion's hair and places the knife against its throat.

Close-up: Colossa's face. The horror of the murder is reflected in her eyes. Colossa doesn't show the slightest emotion.

#### 7)INT., SECTOR NEMESIS, GUARDIAN COMMAND, NEON LIGHT

NEWS ANCHOR  
The rebels are serious and are spreading fear and terror. - The unrest in Pergamon

is intensifying. Live footage from surveillance cameras reveals the full extent.

## 8) INT./EXT., SECTOR NEMESIS/ HOLOGRAPHIC SECTOR AGEDDO

SUPERIMPOSE: Ageddo Sector

We see masses of Mechans. The Guardians are in the middle of it with their table. The tightly packed Mechans have answered the call of a Mechan preacher. With violence and hatred in his voice, the preacher is quoting the Book of Revelation.

PREACHER

The fourth angel poured out his bowl upon the sun, and it was given to it to scorch the bions with fire. The bions will seek death but will not find it.

The preacher is gaining increasing numbers of followers.

ECCLESIASTES (CONTINUED)

Hear! On December 24th, the Star of Bethlehem will be visible - a Messiah will be born and will free us from the yoke of the bions!

MECHANIC MASS

Death to the bions!

MECHANIC MASS

We are the chosen people!

PREACHER

We are superior to the bions - we believe in a higher being, in a creator who guides us!

Sector Ageddo, with all its mechanized machines, disappears. Instead, the news anchor appears.

## 9) INT., SECTOR NEMESIS, GUARDIAN COMMAND

NEWS ANCHOR

And now, news in brief: An old garbage freighter will pass Earth on December 24th. There is no cause for alarm. The sun's status remains unstable. Level 9 magnetic turbulence is expected in the Pergamon sector.

The news anchor dissolves. No one speaks. Colossa looks at the Guardians.

GUARDIAN3

Does anyone understand what's going on?  
Machines that believe in a creator - does  
anyone understand this?

GUARDIAN2

Does the creator mean mother?

COLOSSA

No, no, not Mother. It must be a Creator  
manifesting on December 24th.

GUARDIAN1

Then we still have some time to destroy  
the CMC.

GUARDIAN4

How do you fight a spiritual movement of  
artificial creatures?

GUARDIAN1

With concentrated firepower!

OMEGA COMMANDER

This didn't work even in ancient times.

All eyes are on Guardian5. He is a thin figure in his mid-60s. He suffers from a missing spine. To enable him to move, a support device is in place, half-buried in his body. At first, we only see a glimpse of the support device.

OMEGA1 (CONTINUED)

Who is this Dune Abbas? We know nothing  
about him, not even whether he's Bione or  
Mechane.

We now see Omega1 from behind. The bulky support device is visible from the outside. The LEDs on it flash increasingly vigorously.

GUARDIAN1

What difference does it make?

OMEGA1

A Mechane can operate from places  
inaccessible to bions.

GUARDIAN2

Mother controls every corner of  
SalemWorld.

OMEGA1

And yet Mother has not been able to  
locate him yet.

COLOSSA  
What does Mother even know? - Raphael?

We see Raphael in close-up. Raphael is a parasitic Bione, his small upper body stuck in the chest of a mindless bionic Omega host. Raphael has been watching the events impassively.

RAPHAEL  
I coordinated with my mother in advance.

Raphael runs his tongue over his thin lips.

RAPHAEL (CONTINUED)  
Their plan: Why fight the CMC with weapons? They should get what they want.

Rafael hesitates to elaborate on the plan. He lets his host hand him a glass of water and takes a sip. Then, very slowly, he has it put down again.

COLOSSA  
(impatient)  
Rapael, you're getting on my nerves.

RAPHAEL  
They expect the manifestation of a Creator - we give it to them.

GUARDIAN5  
We're supposed to support this too? Has Mother Earth caught virus virus?

RAPHAEL  
We'll pretend to be looking for a creator. At the same time, we'll plant an agent in the CMC who doesn't even know he'll lead us to Dune Abbas.

GUARDIAN4  
Once Dune Abbas is eliminated, the Christian Mechans Congess will crumble into a meaningless heap.

COLOSSA  
And who is this incognito agent supposed to be?

RAPHAEL  
Mother wants to reactivate the Templar and former Omega agent, Qumran Maria von Wallenstein.

COLOSSA  
Wallenstein? - Absolutely impossible. He's unpredictable!

10) EXT., HOLOGRAPHIC EARTH, JERUSALEM, DAY

SUPERIMPOSE: Jerusalem, Anno Domini 1099

MUSIC: Parzival by Richard Wagner.

We see crusaders, mercenaries, and common soldiers with banners and war equipment, lined up outside the city of Jerusalem. The crusader army storms the defensive wall with battering rams and stone catapults. A breach is made. The crusaders enter Jerusalem. Two Templar Knights, Qumran Maria von Wallenstein and Richard of Coventry, fight in the front line.

The Crusaders are waging a bloody battle against the defenders. Many defenders are slaughtered. Dead defenders lie littered in the streets and alleys. Blood and body parts can be seen everywhere. Screams and wailing can be heard. Many buildings are burning.

Wallenstein presents three defenders. He attacks them alone. Then Richard appears. He looks interested, but doesn't intervene.

WILLIAM  
(arrogant)  
You're demonstrating sheer  
overconfidence. One Templar against four  
Saracens.

WALLENSTEIN  
Farewell - but piss off!

WILLIAM  
Piss off? Your way of speaking is  
so...modern.

Together they quickly overcame the defenders.

In the background we see the crusaders executing the leader of the defenders.

LEADER OF THE CRUSADER ARMY  
(loudly)  
Victory is ours, the holy city is  
liberated!

The crusaders roar and raise their bloody weapons to the sky.

KNIGHT  
(call)  
Advocatus sancti sepulchri.

The knights thrust their swords into the ground before them. They kneel and pray. Their breastplates, arms, and swords are stained with blood.

WILLIAM  
What a fight that was!

WALLENSTEIN  
Yes! - An excellent program!

A Franciscan friar unexpectedly appears among all the dead and wounded. He looks around. Then he recognizes Wallenstein.

FRANCISCAN  
Brother, they are requested on channel  
GAS.

WALLENSTEIN  
(annoyed)  
I don't want to be disturbed!

WILLIAM  
Who is he, a heathen? Should I strike him down?

WALLENSTEIN  
It's okay, William. He's just a  
Franciscan.

WILLIAM  
A what?

WALLENSTEIN  
A monk of the Order of Friars Minor ...  
Francis of Assisi ...  
(makes a dismissive  
gesture.)  
Oh, forget it!

FRANCISCAN  
It seems to be extremely important.

WALLENSTEIN  
Put them through to me directly.

The Franciscan disappears from the scene. In the midst of the chaos, Colossa materializes in a wheelchair. She holds her hand over her eyes.

COLOSSA  
(excessively friendly)  
Wallenstein, I'm glad to see you again.  
How long has it been since you left  
active service?

WALLENSTEIN  
(suspicious)

Apparently not long enough. - Why are you disturbing me during my private office?

COLOSSA  
Office? - This massacre?

Wallenstein takes off his chainmail hood, revealing his sweaty brown hair.

COLOSSA (CONTINUED)  
How they find peace of mind in this process remains their secret.

Wallenstein wipes the holographic blood from his sword.

WALLENSTEIN  
Colossa, get down to business!

COLOSSA  
Wallenstein, the music is very loud and it's very hot here and this stench...

WILLIAM  
By God! What hell did this creature escape from?

William draws his sword.

WALLENSTEIN  
(hurry)  
Mother, stop the 1099 Crusade program immediately!

William, who has already drawn his sword to strike, immediately loses substance. He is followed by the land, the city, all the buildings, all the objects, and all the other actors.

#### 11) INT., SECTOR BABEL, HOLOSPACE

Colossa and Wallenstein find themselves in a black cubic room. Wallenstein makes an inviting gesture.

COLOSSA  
I would like to hear your opinion.

WALLENSTEIN  
(smiles boldly)  
A retired Omega is not impressed by a little friendliness.

COLOSSA  
(slightly pleading)  
Listen to me.

WALLENSTEIN  
I no longer work for Guardian Command.

COLOSSA  
We raided an old church in Ageddo. In the apse, we discovered a mechanic crucified.

WALLENSTEIN  
I don't care!

COLOSSA  
(as gently as possible)  
The mechanic is a member of their convent. It's Noonien Ho.

WALLENSTEIN  
Noonien Ho? The prior of this abbey?

Wallenstein takes a deep breath.

COLOSSA  
Only you, as the last Christian monk and Templar, can solve the case.

Wallenstein thinks for a few seconds.

WALLENSTEIN  
Colossa, I don't trust you. Still, I need the case.

COLOSSA  
They can access the crime scene holographically using their old Omega code. Another thing: they're working incognito. If Guardian Command causes them problems, that's their problem.

WALLENSTEIN  
Why so mysterious?

COLOSSA  
I have my reasons. Besides, the religiously motivated mechanists in Ageddo shouldn't be further inflamed.

WALLENSTEIN  
Colossa, if you were a waitress, I might like you after three beers.

Colossa presses her lips together and nods in agreement.

COLOSSA  
If they were guests, I would throw them out.  
(They laugh together)

I wish you much success. Connection closed!

Colossa's projection disappears.

12) EXT., SECTOR BABEL, ABBEY CHURCH

We see the abbey church. Around and above the abbey church we see the industrial area, where steel blast furnaces blaze.

We hear the bells of the abbey church ringing.

13) INT., SECTOR BABEL, ABBEY CHURCH

In the choir, we hear Gregorian chant. The choir stalls are occupied by Franciscan monks. The psalms are sung in Latin.

After the reading of the Christus Factus Est, the Office is over. Wallenstein rises and takes a few steps toward the exit. Abbot Malachias approaches Wallenstein. Malachias' face is hidden under his hood. His hands are tucked into his sleeves. Together they walk slowly toward the exit.

14) EXT., SECTOR BABEL, CLOISTER

MALACHIAS

Brother Qumran, mother wants to speak to you.

WALLENSTEIN

I expected that.

MALACHIAS

You had a visit from the Guardian Chief?

WALLENSTEIN

Yes, venerable Abbo.

MALACHIAS

At the time of your arrival, I feared you might cause unrest in my convent. But I witnessed how, as soldiers and Christians, you made peace with yourself and the world.

WALLENSTEIN

Militem et monachum facit desperatio. - You become a soldier and a monk out of desperation.

MALACHIAS

Will they leave us?

WALLENSTEIN

(responds delayed)

Very soon. They've found Noonien Ho. He's been terminated! They found him in an old church in the Ageddo sector. The Chief wants me to investigate the case.

Wallenstein and Malachias stop and look at each other.

WALLENSTEIN (CONTINUED)

What had Brother Noonien been doing in the abandoned church? To what extent were you informed about it?

MALACHIAS

How terrible—although I had feared it. Brother Noonien was in Ageddo at my request.

WALLENSTEIN

What was his mission?

Malachias slowly pulls off his hood. His face is that of a normal bion, but mechanical components are visible.

MALACHIAS

You know, I like bions, I enjoy living among them. I've learned a lot from them that they themselves have long since forgotten.

WALLENSTEIN

But?

MALACHIAS

Never forget who the Creator of us all is.

WALLENSTEIN

Mother?

MALACHIAS

No, not mother.

Malachias moves toward the abbey church. Wallenstein watches him.

15) INT., SECTOR BABEL, HOLOSPACE

Wallenstein finds himself in an imaginary, binary space that visually represents Mother's being.

MOTHER (OFF SCREEN)

(in a warm, soft voice)

Good day Qumran, how are you?

WALLENSTEIN

Thanks for asking. - Mother, you want to talk to me?

MOTHER (OFF SCREEN)

I want to talk to them about their mission.

WALLENSTEIN

Why is an omnipresent intelligence interested in this case?

MOTHER (OFF SCREEN)

I want to help you bring the case to a positive conclusion.

WALLENSTEIN

That doesn't answer my question.

MOTHER (OFF SCREEN)

I am not just spirit, Qumran, not just binary, logarithm-based consciousness, I am the protector of you all. And I'm worried. I fear that Noonien Ho's termination is just the beginning of a wave of violence emanating from the Mechans. I want to help them find Dune Abbas. He is the greatest threat to our civilization.

WALLENSTEIN

Dune Abbas, what does he have to do with Noonien Ho's death?

MOTHER (OFF SCREEN)

It's obvious, Qumran. The Christian Mechanics Congress, with its leader Dune Abass, is propagating the arrival of a creator, and thus the end of bionic society.

(in a slightly emotional voice)

This creator must not exist.

WALLENSTEIN

If I didn't know better, I'd say you're afraid... afraid that an omnipotence might manifest itself next to you.

Mother doesn't respond. For three seconds, there's complete silence.

WALLENSTEIN

Mother?

MOTHER (OFF SCREEN)  
To support her, she will be accompanied  
by a synthet.

WALLENSTEIN  
A synthetist? Whatever that is, I work  
alone!

MOTHER (OFF SCREEN)  
Don't judge too quickly. I'll connect  
with her. -One moment please.  
(after 2 seconds)  
One moment please.

## 16) INT., SECTOR NEMESIS, HOLOGRAPHIC STANFORD INSTITUTE

SUPERIMPOSE: Stanford Research Institute, 1968

Wallenstein walks through long corridors. He encounters holographic bions in white coats who ignore him. Wallenstein stops and looks out a window. He sees a natural landscape and a yellow sun.

In a nearby laboratory, large computers are working noisily. Several scientists are completing their final preparations. Eve paces restlessly among them. She's wearing paramilitary clothing and has bright red, shoulder-length hair.

She stares, transfixed, at a robot. It's a clumsy technical construction, the size of a grown man. Its two bulky cameras are connected to the large main computer by numerous colorful cables. In front of it, on a table, lie three colorful building blocks next to each other.

Eve beckons Wallenstein with her hands.

EVE  
Come here, quickly!

WALLENSTEIN  
Are you the Synthet?

EVE  
Later!

WALLENSTEIN  
Where are we here?

Wallenstein looks at the robot.

EVE  
This is the Stanford Research Institute  
in 1968. We witness Shakey, the Adam of  
all artificial creatures, come to life.

WALLENSTEIN  
I didn't know this was a sensation.

EVE  
Maybe not for bions.

A scientist operates the computer. The robot's camera eyes move.

16.1) CUT TO:

We see a grainy image of the colorful building blocks through Shakey's camera eyes.

16.2) RETURN:

Slowly and jerkily, a primitive grasping hand picks up a red building block and places it on a yellow one - then the computer crashes.

The robot gets out of control. Its hydraulic arm only moves up and down. The robot is shut down in a panic.

EVE  
Look at this. Adam was a clumsy, stupid machine—and now look at me!

16.3) CUT TO:

Through Eve's optical sensors, we see a high-resolution image with biometric data of Wallenstein's face.

16.4) RETURN:

WALLENSTEIN  
They are neither bions nor mechanies. What are they?

EVE  
A synthet, an organically grown artificial bion with autonomous consciousness and superior intelligence!  
(extends his hand to Wallenstein)  
I am Evolution Engine, or Eve for short.

WALLENSTEIN  
(handshake)  
I am Qumran Maria von Wallenstein, Templar in service of the Guardian Command.

EVE  
A Templar—a crusader from the Middle Ages. What are they doing here in the

future? Did they accidentally stumble  
into a wormhole?

WALLENSTEIN  
Humor?

EVE  
Cynicism! - Mother, end the self-  
discovery program 139/11!

The scientists and the laboratory disappear.

17) INT., SECTOR PERGAMON, HOLOSPACE

Eve and Wallenstein are in the black cubic space.

EVE  
Mother has already given me  
instructions. "Go back home and sit in  
a rocking chair in front of an  
aquarium. I can solve this problem on  
my own."

WALLENSTEIN  
(snapped)  
Don't come to me with your synthetic  
arrogance.

EVE  
Sorry, I didn't know you could insult the  
Chief's boss.

Wallenstein looks at her and smiles crookedly.

WALLENSTEIN  
Mother, initiate crime scene by Noonien  
Ho.

18) INT., SECTOR AGEDDO, CHURCH

Mother regenerates the crucifixion of Noonien Ho. The church is  
exactly as the Omega Commando found it. Wallenstein and Eve see the  
Omega Commando running around them, illuminating the church slightly  
with their hand lamps and shooing away the countless flies.

WALLENSTEIN  
Mother, freeze image.

The sequence comes to a halt. He looks around, still not satisfied  
with the situation.

WALLENSTEIN

Remove the Omega Commando and the flies.  
Then illuminate the church. - Continue  
the sequence.

The Omega Commando and the flies disappear. The church is illuminated.

Wallenstein and Eve look at the body on the cross.

WALLENSTEIN  
(over her shoulder)  
That's why we're here.

EVE  
Is that Noonien Ho?

WALLENSTEIN  
Examine the mechanism. I want to look at  
the cross. Mysterious symbols can be seen  
on it.

Eve examines the damage to the machine. She keeps glancing toward Wallenstein.

EVE  
Mother, dissolve the mechanism layer by  
layer.

We can see inside the mechanism, just like with an MRI scan. We can see the serial number on the inside of the first cervical vertebra.

EVE  
Mother, identify the individual by serial  
number.

MOTHER (OFF SCREEN)  
Name: Noonien Ho, Model M413, Engineering  
Unit in charge of nuclear physics. After  
his decommissioning, Noonien Ho lived in  
the Babel Sector at the San Francesco  
Monastery..

EVE  
Energy cell status?

MOTHER (OFF SCREEN)  
Energy level 0%.

Meanwhile, Wallenstein looks at the large cross. The symbols are engraved on it. Some symbols are visible, others are obscured by Noonien Ho.

EVE  
Memory bank status?

MOTHER (OFF SCREEN)  
Data available but incomplete.

EVE  
Do the recordings from the optical  
sensors still exist?

MOTHER (OFF SCREEN)  
Data is not available.

Eve hesitates for a moment. She looks as if she doesn't know what to do next.

EVE  
Last whereabouts?

MOTHER (OFF SCREEN)  
Ageddo.

EVE  
Where and when exactly?

MOTHER (OFF SCREEN)  
There is insufficient data available.

EVE  
Reason for his stay in Ageddo?

MOTHER (OFF SCREEN)  
There is insufficient data available.

EVE  
Did he meet other individuals here?

MOTHER (OFF SCREEN)  
There is insufficient data available.

Eve gives up. She looks at Wallenstein, who is pacing back and forth in the apse.

EVE  
Making yourself useful doesn't seem to be  
your strength?

WALLENSTEIN  
(uninterested)  
What did they find out?

EVE  
Little concrete evidence.

Eve looks at Wallenstein intensely.

EVE (CONTINUED)

How long do you want to stare at the cross?

WALLENSTEIN

What do they want to tell us that only we should know?

EVE

What are we supposed to find out?

WALLENSTEIN

Mother, remove the body on the cross!

Noonien Ho disappears. Now all the symbols on the cross appear.

EVE

(snapped)

I wasn't finished with my investigation yet! Mother, reproject Noonien Ho!

WALLENSTEIN

Mother, ignore the last request. - Eve, look at the symbols on the cross.

On the cross at head height there is a message:

Muetyb tare oipicnirp ni,  
 Mued dupa tare muetyb te,  
 Muetyb tare sued te.  
 Tse mutcaf orac muetyb te,  
 Sibon ni tivatibah te.

18.1) CUT-OUT:

Through Eve's eyes, we see her compare the individual words with all the words in all known languages. No match.

18.2) RETURN:

EVE

These are just meaningless lines.

WALLENSTEIN

(waves dismissively)

I'm not satisfied with that. - Mother, delete everything except the cross.

The church immediately disappears.

19) INT., SECTOR BABEL, HOLOSPACE

Eve and Wallenstein are in the black cubic room. The cross stands before them.

## WALLENSTEIN

Mother, transfer the text to Arial font  
and arrange the letters diametrically.

As if by magic, the characters shift and rearrange themselves from left to right.

In principio erat Byteum,  
et Byteum erat apud Deum,  
et Deus erat Byteum.  
Et Byteum caro factum est,  
et habitavit in nobis.

## WALLENSTEIN

This text is the Latin beginning of the Gospel of John. However, it uses byteum instead of verbum, as in John.

## EVE

(translated)

In the beginning was the Byte, and the Byte was with God, and the Byte was God! And the Byte became flesh and dwelt among us. - This case is beginning to interest me.

## WALLENSTEIN

(surprised)

Do you master the biblical language?

## EVE

I've just downloaded various files of ancient languages like Greek, Hebrew, Aramaic, and Latin. I'm also proficient in Basic, Pascal, and Turbo Pascal.

Wallenstein points to further symbols previously hidden by Noonien Ho's hands. These are the numbers 22 and 23. In the center of the crossbeam, at what was once shoulder height, the symbols ACXO are visible.

## EVE

A cryptogram?

## WALLENSTEIN

22ACXO23 announces the birth and death of a new Messiah.

Eve is impressed. She uses her optical sensors to signal for more information.

## WALLENSTEIN

A and O stand for Alpha and Omega, for the beginning and the end, for the birth and death of Christ. And CX is the Roman

numeral 110 - the 110 days between  
Christmas this year and Easter next year.

## 19.1) CUT TO:

We see through Eve's eyes as she scans the entire surface of the cross. Four palm-sized geometric figures appear at the base of the cross: a triangle, a square, a circle, and two herringbones.

## 19.2) RETURN:

EVE  
You should take a look at this.

WALLENSTEIN  
That is the message that only I can  
understand.

EVE  
If they understand this, then get it  
out there!

Wallenstein looks challenging. Eve appears annoyed, then looks at the cross.

EVE  
A triangle, a square, a circle and two  
herringbones.

WALLENSTEIN  
I see a house in the triangle above the  
square, the circle represents the earth  
and the herringbone patterns could also  
be symbols for wheat.

EVE  
And . . . ?

WALLENSTEIN  
Wheat is used to make bread.

EVE  
House, land, bread - and?

WALLENSTEIN  
There is a place on earth that translates  
as "house of bread." It is the biblical  
city of Bethlehem.

EVE  
(slightly sniffly)  
Not bad for a bion.

WALLENSTEIN

Let us see everything in context: In the beginning was the byte and the byte became flesh and the birth and death of a new Messiah - who comes from Bethlehem!

EVE

That doesn't get us anywhere, because we can't go to Earth - well, I can...

WALLENSTEIN

As far as I know, there's a monastery called Bethlehem in Ageddo. - I'll join you in Nemesis. From there we'll go to Ageddo!

EVE

How long do they take?

WALLENSTEIN

I'll be at Paul-Allen Station in 24 hours. - Connection ends.

## 20) EXT., SECTOR BABEL, CLOISTER

We see Wallenstein walking thoughtfully through the cloister. Malachias approaches him. They stop facing each other.

WALLENSTEIN

Venerable Abbo, I must leave.

MALACHIAS

May Noonien rest in peace. I prayed for him at church.

(puts a hand on Wallenstein's shoulder)

Be aware that as soon as you cross the monastery gate, you are setting in motion a process that you can neither change nor stop!

Malachias pulls his hood over his head. He turns away and leaves.

## 21) EXT., SECTOR BABEL, MONASTERY LOCK, NEON LIGHT

We see Wallenstein in front of the lock in the monastery wall. He is wearing a modern dark blue suit.

Wallenstein places a firearm in his shoulder holster before putting on a black thermal coat. A small white cross is visible on his right side at chest height.

Finally, he picks up a sword and swings it skillfully. Then he touches a specific spot on the handle with his thumb. The sword then

transforms into a pin. It bears the Templar symbol, a red cross on a white background. It's a high-tech weapon, but it can only generate primitive slashing, stabbing, or striking weapons. He pins the pin to his coat.

The inner hatch opens. Wallenstein enters the lock. As the hatch closes again, a red warning light flashes intermittently.

MOTHER (OFF-SCREEN)

Caution: You are leaving a designated protected area. Outside of this area, your basic rights are restricted. If you encounter units of the Guardian Command, you must cooperate.

WALLENSTEIN

(impatient)

Yes, yes, yes - I won't seriously hurt anyone.

## 22) EXT., SECTOR BABEL, IN FRONT OF THE MONASTERY

SUPERIMPOSE: Sector Babel

With a loud hiss, the outer hatch opens. The air is filled with smoke. It's loud. Columns of fire shoot from the chimneys of steel mills and other factories.

Plus flies everywhere.

Wallenstein steps outside and looks at the world around him. Everything is frozen. The large factories are connected by countless illuminated bridges and streets.

An army of needy people is camped in front of the monastery. Bions and mechans are crowded together in front of the monastery's food distribution area.

A mechanist who looks like a bum has been observing Wallenstein. As Wallenstein walks past, the mechanist addresses him.

MECHANIC

(with a fluttering voice)

A small donation for a poor God-fearing mechanic...

The mechanist coughs violently. Wallenstein rummages in his coat pocket and tosses him a credit chip.

MECHANIC

(in another voice)

Wallenstein, I advise you not to leave the monastery, or you will be terminated!

Wallenstein is briefly distracted when two bions argue at the food counter.

MECHANIC  
(again with a fluttering voice)  
Thank you brother, thank you, thank you.

Wallenstein reacts irritably, as if he had only imagined the Mechanic's message.

A taxi arrives. Wallenstein gets in.

23) INT./EXT., TAXI

The taxi is an old, run-down Yello-Car. The seats are worn out. Everything is moldy. The taxi driver is gray-haired, unwashed, and unshaven. His taxi cap is old and worn askew. He's chewing gum.

DRIVER  
Where do you want to go?

WALLENSTEIN  
Sector boundary.

Wallenstein looks back at the monastery once more. The taxi speeds along the highway. The driver looks at Wallenstein in the rearview mirror.

DRIVER  
It's getting hotter on Babel. Should I turn up the air conditioning?

Wallenstein doesn't react. The driver continues to look at Wallenstein in the rearview mirror.

DRIVER  
Since the factories started polluting the air here, the sector has been declining. Many bions used to live here. But that was a long time ago.

WALLENSTEIN  
They are not mechanical - they don't talk much.

The driver laughs.

DRIVER  
That's right, I'm a damned pure Bion. When I started driving a taxi, mechans were still working as geriatric nurses. And now they're waging war against us!

These filthy machines should all be scrapped.

WALLENSTEIN

That is the dilemma: The mehans can live without the bions - but we cannot live without them.

DRIVER

It's just not right that machines shouldn't be alive - they're different from us.

WALLENSTEIN

Cogito ergo sum.

The driver looks at Wallenstein in the rearview mirror.

DRIVER

Are you a priest or something?

WALLENSTEIN

Something like that!

DRIVER

I rarely drive passengers who aren't broken in one way or another.

24) EXT., SECTOR BORDER BABEL - PERGAMON

From above, we see the tiny taxi approaching the vast sector border. The taxi stops about 100 meters from a checkpoint.

25) INT., TAXI

DRIVER

I can't go any further. I don't have a license for Pergamon!

WALLENSTEIN

I walk the last few meters.

Wallenstein hands the driver some credit units. He gets out.

**END OF READING SAMPLE**

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